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PATENT**Amendments to the Claims – Current Status of Claims**

1. (Currently Amended) A method of forming a vacuum microelectronic device comprising:

forming at least one electron emitter on a substrate;

applying a ~~first~~ conditioning electric field to move a portion of the at least one electron emitter in a direction toward the ~~first~~ conditioning electric field, wherein the conditioning electric field is of a sufficient strength to maintain the at least one electron emitter in the direction of the conditioning electric field after removing the conditioning electric field; ~~and~~

~~maintaining the at least one electron emitter in the direction after removing the first conditioning electric field.~~

2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein applying the ~~first~~ conditioning electric field includes applying the ~~first~~ conditioning electric field to have a value of at least 0.2 to 50 volts per micro-meter, and further including extracting a current from the at least one electron emitter wherein the at least one electron emitter has an internal current density of at least 1×10^4 amperes per square centimeter.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 further including subsequently operating the at least one electron emitter using a ~~second~~ an operating electric field having a value that is less than the value of the ~~first~~ conditioning electric field.

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4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 3 wherein using the ~~second~~ operating electric field includes using the ~~second~~ operating electric field having a value that is less than ninety percent of the value of the ~~first~~ conditioning electric field.

5. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein applying the ~~first~~ conditioning electric field includes using a sequence of alternately applying and removing the ~~first~~ conditioning electric field.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein forming at least one electron emitter on a substrate includes forming at least one nanotube emitter on the substrate.

Claims 7-20 (Canceled)